

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
MEDFORD DISTRICT OFFICE
3040 BIDDLE ROAD
MEDFORD, OREGON 97504

DECISION RECORD / RATIONALE / FONSI

GALICE CREEK ROAD SLIDE REMOVAL PROJECT (EA # OR110-02-12)

I. DECISION:

The decision is to adopt Alternative 2 as presented in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project and to remove the slide. The decision is to use waste disposal sites 1 and 3 in addition to the Leopold Mine site and to use them in a manner that will allow the project to be implemented at the lowest cost. All of the project design features described in the EA are to be included in the implementation of this decision.

II. RATIONALE:

The Galice Creek Road is a major and critically important road for recreationists including users of the Backcountry Byway and those floating the Rogue National Wild and Scenic River both commercially and non-commercially. Opening the road will keep it available for use and not compel users to seek longer and more costly alternate routes. It is also a critical road for public land management, including fire suppression, for a large area of BLM and Forest Service land. Thus the decision to open the road and the rejection of Alternative 1, the no action alternative.

The project plan includes continual review of the work and the effect of the work on slide / slope stability. This provides flexibility with regard to the extent of slide removal work that would ultimately be done with the intent of finding an acceptable balance between stabilizing the slide to provide a reasonably safe forest roadway while minimizing the potential for accelerating slope instability and potential environmental impacts.

Depositing a limited amount of the slide material at the Leopold Mine site will provide two benefits: a) reduce the slide clean up costs by allowing a shorter down hill haul distance, and b) provide the amount and type of material that will be needed in the Leopold Mine site reclamation work. The amount of slide material disposed at the site is limited so it will not adversely hinder future activities at the site which is an unpatented mining claim.

Site 1 is selected because it provides a location closer to the slide and thus represents a substantial cost savings over hauling all of the material to more distant sites. Future restoration opportunities of this site will be foregone. Restoration potential of the site is, however, limited in the short term due the geotextile that was

buried at the site during landing construction.

Not using Site 2 as a slide waste disposal site will allow the previously proposed site restoration to go forward. While the size of the site is small and its potential contribution to increasing of the extent of late-successional forest in the LSR is relatively minor, it does have short term restoration potential in contrast to Sites 1 and 3. It also has a greater potential for wildlife habitat restoration than exists at Site 3. Not using Site 2 will result in a higher cleanup cost due to the longer haul distance to Site 3 where the material will go instead, this higher cost is accepted in order to promote late-successional reserve management goals.

Site 3 is favored to receive the bulk of material because it is already a highly disturbed old rock quarry that has limited restoration potential.

This decision is consistent with the Medford District Resource Management Plan and the Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines on Management of Habitat for Late-Successional and Old-Growth Forest Related Species Within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl and, the Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines (January 2001). This decision is also consistent with the Endangered Species Act, The Native American Religious Freedom Act and cultural resource management laws and regulations.

This decision is consistent with, and furthers, the BLM's Strategic Planning Goals 1.01 (provide opportunities for environmentally responsible recreation), 01.02 (provide opportunities of environmentally responsible commercial activities) and 01.04 (reduce threats to public health, safety and property).

This decision will not have any adverse impacts to energy development, production, supply and/or distribution (per Executive Order 13212).

III. FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT: On the basis of the information contained in the environmental assessment and record for this project, it is my determination that the decision stated above will not have a significant effect on the human environment. An environmental impact statement will not, therefore, be prepared.

This conclusion is also based on a consideration of both the context and the intensity of the impacts of the selected actions (40 CFR §1508.27):

(a) Context - The environmental consequences of the actions have been assessed at the site specific level as well as being considered at the watershed level and within the larger social context including the role and importance of the Galice Access road and it being in an open and safe condition.

(b) Intensity (severity) of impacts - The conclusion regarding the significance of the impacts is supported by the following elements, among other considerations:

1. The action will benefit the public as noted. The site specific impacts are minimal both at the slide site and the selected deposition sites, all of which are already highly disturbed.

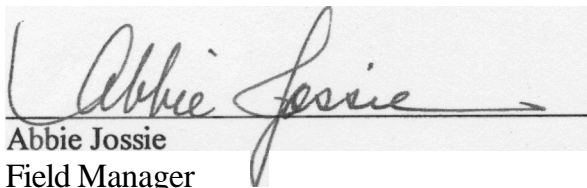
2. No adverse effects to public health or safety have been identified. Public safety will be improved by making the road safely passable and by stabilizing the slide site.
3. No unique characteristics of the action sites have been identified.
4. There is no indication of any highly controversial effects on the quality of the human environment.
5. There is no indication that the effects on the human environment are highly uncertain and or involve unique or **unknown** risks.
6. The action is not precedence setting; clearing of slides **is** a common and frequent road maintenance activity.
7. There is no indication that the actions will appreciably contribute to any cumulative impacts that would be judged significant.
8. There is no indication that the action will cause loss or destruction of any scientific, cultural, or historical resources.
9. There is no indication that the action will adversely affect ESA listed species or ESA identified critical habitat.
10. There are no indications that the action will violate any environmental protection law or requirement.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

This decision is a forest management decision. Administrative remedies are available to persons who believe that they will be adversely affected by this Decision. Administrative recourse is available in accordance with BLM regulations and must follow the procedures and requirements described in **43 CFR 5003 - Administrative Remedies**.

In accordance with the BLM Forest Management Regulation **43 CFR 5003.2(a&c)**, the effective date of this decision will be the date of publication of a Notice of Decision and FONSI in The Grants Pass Daily Courier. Publication of this notice will establish the date initiating the protest period provided for in accordance with **43 CFR 5003.3**. While similar notices may be published in other newspapers, the date of publication in the Grants Pass Daily Courier will prevail as the effective date of this decision.

Any contest of this decision should state specifically which portion or element of the decision is being protested and cite the applicable CFR regulations


Abbie Jossie
Field Manager
Grants Pass Resource Area

3-22-02
Date